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2. THE SITUATION IN JORDAN

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Prime Minister Nabulsi, after apparently having resisted King Hussain's efforts to have extreme leftists removed from the Jordanian cabinet, on 20 March informed the British ambassador that he would dismiss pro-Soviet minister of state for foreign affairs, Abdulla Rimawi, according to the American embassy in London. Nabulsi also proposed a program to limit Communist activity without actual denunciation of the USSR, to promote economic development, and to curb the right-wing nationalist Moslem Brotherhood, which has recently been cultivated by the king as an ally in the "street." If Hussain should reject the above program, Nabulsi said he intended to resign.

Although Nabulsi's move seems to be a concession to Hussain, it may actually be a scheme to advance long-run leftist interests by sacrificing Rimawi and weakening the king's support from the militant right.

The British appear to believe that for the time being Nabulsi is less dangerous in office than out.

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4. AUSTRALIA PLANNING TO EQUIP ITS FORCES WITH AMERICAN MATERIEL

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Australian officials have confirmed to the American embassy in Canberra that their revised defense plans include re-equipment of the army and air force with American materiel. The plans have been approved in principle by the Australian cabinet and [] disclosed to parliamentary members of the government parties on 20 March.

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Australian defense policy has been the subject of a basic review for several months, taking into account modern weapons developments and the country's new commitments in Southeast Asia. Experience in World War II, together with the recently proposed retrenchment in the defense burden of the United Kingdom, have pointed up the need for greater reliance on American sources of supply.

Australian plans call for purchase of American fighter and transport planes, as well as field weapons, and domestic manufacture of some component parts. In addition, the number of conscripts and the size of the Citizens Military Force--equivalent to a national guard--will be cut in the interest of developing a more highly mobile striking force.

The embassy regards the new plans as a further step by Australia to align its defense policy more closely with that of the United States. It anticipates acceptance by the Australian parliament and public and little serious resistance on the part of the opposition Labor Party.

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5. PETROLEUM COMPANIES AGREE TO BUILD PIPELINE THROUGH TURKEY

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British, French, Dutch and American petroleum companies have tentatively agreed to establish an international consortium for the purpose of building a major pipeline system from the Persian Gulf to the eastern Mediterranean via Turkey, according to the US embassy in London.

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In recent exploratory talks the oil men agreed that the proposed pipeline should consist of two pipelines, one 34 and one 26 inches, having a combined capacity of 1,200,000 barrels a day, the first line to be completed by 1960; that it should ultimately transport petroleum from Iraq, Kuwait, Iran and Saudi Arabia; and that it should be protected by treaty. They further agreed to establish committees on engineering, organization, finance and treaty arrangements.

In addition to providing an alternative to the Suez Canal as a means of transit for the Middle East petroleum industry, such an arrangement would help Turkey attain some degree of economic stability.

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